

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-07 RSC-01

CIEP-03 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0390

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 6331

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, ECON, LA

SUBJECT: LAOS ECONOMIC MISSIONS

1. ACCOUNT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS RESULTING NON-ACCEPTANCE IMF
RECOMMENDATION, PGNU DECIDED SEND ECONOMIC MISSIONS TO FRIENDLY
COUNTRIES. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH MINISTER OF NATIONAL ECONOMY/
PLAN, SOTH PHETRASY; MINISTER OF FINANCE, NGON SANANIKONE; AND
SECSTATE OF NATIONAL ECONOMY/PLAN, SOMPHOU OUDOMVILAY, USAID DIR
WAS TOLD MINISTRY OF NATIONAL ECONOMY/PLAN OFFICIALS HAVE
RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS TO PREPARE DOCUMENTATION TO PERMIT THESE
ECONOMIC MISSIONS TO DISCUSS LAO FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC REQUIRE-
MENTS WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. USAID CONSULTANT LOUIS BERGER
AND USAID ADVISORS ARE DISCREETLY WORKING WITH MINPLAN PERSONNEL
TO PREPARE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION BUT ARE OBVIOUSLY RESTRICTED IN
THEIR LATITUDE DUE PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY MINISTER
OF NATIONAL ECONOMY/PLAN. AS SOON AS DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN
FINALIZED, THEY WILL BE FORWARDED TO WASHINGTON.

2. PGNU PLANS AT PRESENT ARE: FIRST OF THREE ECONOMIC MISSIONS
WILL DEPART SECOND HALF OF SEPTEMBER TO CHINA, SOVIET UNION,
NORTH KOREA, SOUTH KOREA, JAPAN AND ALGIERS TO PRESENT LAO

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SHOPPING LIST. DELEGATION WILL BE HEADED BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL

ECONOMY/PLAN, SOTH PHETRASY, AND WILL BE EQUALLY BALANCED WITH PL AND VTE SIDE MEMBERS. SECOND ECONOMIC MISSION SCHEDULED TO DEPART NOVEMBER-DECEMBER WILL VISIT BOTH EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE INCLUDING SCANDANAVIAN COUNTRIES, AND THIRD MISSION IS SCHEDULED FOR CANADA, U.S. AND LATIN AMERICA SOMETIME EARLY 1975. IT IS NOW PLANNED DELEGATION WILL ALWAYS BE HEADED BY MINISTER OF NATIONAL ECONOMY/PLAN, SOTH PHETRASY.

3. PGNU BELIEVES THAT BY SENDING THESE MISSIONS ABROAD SOME OF THEIR IMMEDIATE AND LONG-RANGE FISCAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED; HOWEVER, GIVEN EXPERIENCES OF LAST TWO WEEKS WHEN NEW ECONOMIC CONTROLLED MEASURES CAME INTO BEING, CONSIDERABLE DOUBT IS NOW RAISED AMONG RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS WHETHER THESE MISSIONS REALLY CAN HELP LAOS SOLVE DAY-TO-DAY BREAD AND BUTTER PROBLEMS THEY HAVE CREATED FOR THEMSELVES.

4. MINFIN SANANIKONE WHO WILL HEAD LAO DELEGATION TO FORTH-COMING SEPTEMBER IMF AND IBRD ANNUAL MEETING TOLD USAID DIR HE HOPES TO DISCUSS LAOS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WITH APPROPRIATE U.S. OFFICIALS DURING HIS STAY IN WASHINGTON.

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